

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

The abstract has been amended to overcome the objection in Section 2 of the office action.

Regarding the objections to the specification and drawings, the Applicants enclose Exhibit 1 to clarify the misunderstanding in the Office Action regarding Applicants' disclosed feature of a thrust sheet being thinner than a recess amount of a thrust cap (see Office Action sections 1 and 3). As may be determined by inspection of the illustration in Exhibit 1, the thrust sheet is thinner than the recess amount of the thrust cap. A fuller description of this feature is provided in paragraph [0045] of the present specification. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objections to the specification and drawings is deemed to be warranted.

Support for the amendment of claim 1 is provided at least in Figs. 1 and 2.

Claim 6 has been canceled, thereby obviating the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, applied thereto.

Claims 1 and 9 were rejected, under 35 USC §102(b), as being anticipated by Fukutani et al. (US 6,700,256). Claims 2-4 and 6 were rejected, under 35 USC §103(a), as being unpatentable over Fukutani et al. (US 6,700,256) in view of Shiraki et al. (US 6,465,927). Claim 5 was rejected, under 35 USC §103(a), as being unpatentable over Fukutani et al. (US 6,700,256) in view of Shiraki et al. (US 6,465,927) and Kim (US 2004/0032176). Claim 7 was rejected, under 35 USC §103(a), as being unpatentable over Fukutani et al. (US 6,700,256) in view of Shiraki et al. (US 6,465,927) and Kobayashi (US 2005/0285473). Claims 8, 10, and 11 were

rejected, under 35 USC §103(a), as being unpatentable over Fukutani et al. (US 6,700,256) in view of Tamaoka (US 2007/0007841). Claim 12 was rejected, under 35 USC §103(a), as being unpatentable over Fukutani et al. (US 6,700,256) in view of Karidis (US 4,712,027). To the extent these rejections may be deemed applicable to the amended claims, the Applicants respectfully traverse based on the points set forth below.

Claim 1 now defines a disk apparatus having a bearing space constructed by forming a surface constituting a rotor frame into a step shape, such that the size of the bearing space in its radial direction is greater than the size of a bearing in its radial direction. This feature may be better understood when considered in connection with the exemplary, non-limiting, embodiment of the invention illustrated by application Fig. 1 and Figs. 1 and 1B of enclosed Exhibit 2. Application Fig. 1 and Fig. 1B of Exhibit 2 illustrate that a portion of rotor frame 221 is formed into a step shape such that the step portion projects toward a disk holding member (chuck member 210) to thereby form bearing space 225. Application Fig. 1 and Fig. 1 of Exhibit 2 illustrate that the size of bearing space 225, in its radial direction, is greater than the size of bearing 231 in its radial direction.

With the claimed subject matter, an advantage is attained in that bearing space 225 can be widened in accordance with the outer dimension of the bearing 231 to be accommodated (see application Fig. 1), and as a result, since it is unnecessary to reduce the outer dimension of bearing 231, the holding force of bearing 231 for holding a shaft 222 is not deteriorated and the disk apparatus can be reduced in thickness and size without generating surface vibration of chuck member 210 (disk holding member), which is supported by shaft 222.

Fig. 1A of Exhibit 2 illustrates an expanded view of shaft 1, rotor frame 2, and the bearing space within Fukutani's Fig. 2. As may be determined by inspection of Fig. 1 of Exhibit 2 and Fig. 1 of the application, the claimed structure for the rotor frame provides an advantageously larger bearing space 225 for accommodating the upper portion of bearing 231. Thus, bearing 231 may be thicker with the claimed structure than can Fukutani's bearing 5, which is beveled at its upper portion (see Fukutani's Fig. 2), so as to provide greater support and stability.

Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that Fukutani does not anticipate the subject matter now defined by claim 1.

Therefore, the rejections applied to claims 2-5 and 7-12 are considered to be overcome and allowance of claim 1 and all claims dependent therefrom is deemed to be warranted.

Moreover, with regard to claims 7, 8, 10, and 11, the Applicants note that Kobayashi and Tamaoka have filing dates antedated by Applicants' PCT International filing date of October 14, 2004. The PCT International application is identified in the Declaration for Patent Application filed May 31, 2007. Under the provisions of 35 USC § 365, the Applicants are entitled to rely on their PCT international filing date as the effective U.S. filing date for purposes of overcoming prior art. Therefore, allowance of claims 7, 8, 10, and 11 is deemed to be warranted for this independent reason.

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

If any issues remain which may best be resolved through a telephone communication, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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